

**SUMMARY OF THE
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
APRIL 12, 2001**

The Board of Directors of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on April 12, 2001 in regular session. The meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Charles Brokopp of the Utah Department of Health, following the agenda distributed previously to Board members (Attachment A). The list of participants is shown in Attachment B, the new list of action items is given in Attachment C, and the cumulative list of action items is given in Attachment D.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Following review of the minutes of the March 8, 2001, meeting, it was moved, seconded and approved to accept the minutes as amended. Dr. Brokopp reviewed action items, which have been updated to their current status.

UPDATE ON NELAC 7I MEETING PLANS

Ms. Sample reviewed plans for the Seventh NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC 7i). The meeting is scheduled for December 3 - 7, 2001 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott hotel in Arlington, VA. Training sessions, a new feature, being considered include: ethics, measurement uncertainty, and NELAP program evaluation issues. Ms. Sample said that material will be prepared for the NELAC website to determine stakeholder interests in these topics. She also said that a preliminary brochure for the meeting should be ready for distribution at the NELAC 7 meeting next month including information on the tentative agenda, costs and meeting format.

NELAC 7 STATUS & AGENDA

Dr. Brokopp reported that more meeting registrations for the Seventh NELAC Annual Meeting have been received than expected at this time. Hotel room reservations are also materializing well. Mr. Paul Johnson and Ms. Colleen Freeze, who are coordinating meeting plans for the Utah Department of Health, discussed the current status of their work. Session requirements for audio/visual or other equipment was discussed. It was noted that the end of the voting session may conflict with airline departures to the East coast and that adjustments will be attempted to resolve this conflict. A final agenda will be posted on the NELAC website in the near future.

POLICY ON EXPANSION OF THE SCOPE OF NELAC

This issue, continued from the previous meeting, was deferred.

MEETING WITH REGIONAL RS&T DIRECTORS

Ms. Hankins reported that she met recently with EPA's Regional Science & Technology staff. She reported that they expressed their belief that NELAC is important and that EPA should continue to be involved in its activities. They also committed to participate in EPA's operation of a NELAP AA

program and that the regional laboratories will be compliant with the NELAC standards.

TRANSITION COMMITTEE ISSUES

Communications Issues Paper

Ms. Labie, chair of the Transition committee, reviewed the issue of NELAP-accredited laboratories needing a “safe” focal point for resolving negative experiences with NELAP. Reluctance to involve their own primary accrediting authority appears to be based on concerns of possible retribution. The committee has studied this issue, developed alternatives for a defined communication mechanism, and recommends that an independent clearinghouse be established. Discussion included other possible options, including the possibility of an independent organization; the possibility that a suborganization of ACIL might facilitate this process. Ms. Labie will check on the status of this possibility. Mr. Louis Johnson, chair of the Accrediting Authority committee, reported that his committee has drafted changes to chapter 6 of the NELAC Standard for discussion and voting at NELAC 7.

Laboratory Survey

Ms. Labie also reported that the Transition committee has completed development of a survey for laboratories and accrediting authorities (accredited or potential) to capture the demographics and concerns of NELAC stakeholders. Mr. Johnson noted that the Accrediting Authority committee is also drafting a survey. It was agreed that the two committees will work together to coordinate their efforts

REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Dr. Brokopp then invited the committee chairs to brief the Board on issues their committees plan to discuss at NELAC 7.

Accreditation Process

Mr. Wheatley, chair of the committee, said that the committee plans to discuss minor modifications to the grandfathering clause and mobile laboratories.

Accrediting Authority

Mr. Johnson, chair of the committee, said that the committee plans to focus discussion on sections 6.2.3 (documents and maintenance) in response to comments from the On-site Assessment committee, and section 6.3.1.b (assessors), with significant changes in section 6.4.2 (surveillance auditing)

Field Activities

No report during meeting. In a written report submitted subsequent the meeting, Dr. Bart Simmons reported that the committee will discuss:

- S the 2 year moratorium on Stack Sampling standards
 - S the ELAB recommendation
 - S the committee’s concurrence and,
 - S re-evaluation after 2 years
- S the General Sampling Standard
 - S coordination with Quality Systems, and

- S a proposed checklist for the General Sampling Standard.
- S Priorities for additional Field Activity Standards:
- S Mobile Labs
- S a joint meeting planned with Accreditation Process before NELAC 7

On-site Assessment

No report during meeting. In a written report submitted subsequent the meeting, Mr. Ingersoll reported that the committee will be discussing changes to Chapter 3; the Assessor Training Test Examination; Technical Specialists (definition, qualifications, responsibilities/authority, distinctions between technical specialist and assessor) and four new appendices.

Proficiency Testing

Ms. Burmeister, chair of the committee, said that the committee is wrestling with implementation issues. She noted that FAQs for reporting and scoring PT data have been posted on the NELAC website and that the committee has completed uniform method codes to be used in NELAP. She also noted that the committee is developing analyte codes and expects to have a draft list ready for distribution at NELAC 7. She also noted that the committee will recommend that previously used PT samples be allowed for corrective action and will propose, with the Program Policy and Structure committee, that fields of testing be based on technology/matrix/analyte (or analyte group).

Program Policy & Structure

Dr. Jackson, chair of the committee, said that the committee will propose a change in the scope of accreditation to technology/matrix/analyte (or analyte group), changing the phrase “Fields of Testing” to “Fields of Accreditation” for clarity. The committee also will recommend changing the term “reciprocity” to “recognition” for clarity and consistency with the international community.

Quality Systems - Scott Siders

Mr. Siders, chair of the committee, said that the committee plans a general discussion relating to integration of the chapter with ISO 17025 and PBMS; discussion of the draft asbestos appendix will not be presented for voting. Other proposed changes in the body of chapter 5, Appendix D.1 (Chemical Testing), and D.3 (microbiology) are extensions of discussion at NELAC 6i.

Regulatory Coordination

Dr. Kircher, chair of the committee, said that the committee has not met since NELAC 6i, but plans to discuss revisions to the regulatory model, the EPA regulatory agenda. He noted that critical decisions are deferred to the primary accrediting authority, so associated regulations need to specify criteria for referral.

National Database - Matt Caruso

Mr. Caruso, chair of the committee, said that the committee’s discussions will focus on the status of the NELAP database, with a presentation by the EPA contractor. Firewall software implementation is in

progress, but system development is slower than planned. It was noted that contractor staffing problems have been encountered and resolved by Dr. Jim Stemmler, the EPA Task Order Manager.

Transition - Silkie Labie

Ms. Labie, chair of the committee, said that the committee has held monthly meetings since NELAC 6i. They have identified communication problems as a major issue in NELAC implementation as well as expectations which the national database probably will resolve. The committee has also discussed secondary accreditation requirements.

Nominating

No report.

Membership & Outreach - Marge Prevost

Ms. Prevost, chair of the committee, said that the committee is developing a questionnaire to determine what stakeholders would like from NELAC. The committee is also considering a policy for submitting issues.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Hankins noted that nominees to the Board and for chair-elect are needed. Dr. Brokopp will contact Dr. Pearson, chair of the nominating committee, to determine progress.

Upcoming presentations of NELAC to professional organizations were reviewed. The Board and chairs were reminded that the current default implementation date for changes to the Standard is two years unless explicitly included in the voting issue.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of this Board is scheduled for May 10, 2001, at 1:30 p.m. EDT, by teleconference.

NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DRAFT AGENDA
April 12, 2001
1:00 - 3:00 pm EDT

5. Approval of Minutes of March 8, 2001 Meeting * - *Chuck Brokopp*
6. Update on Interim Meeting Location & Date - *Jackie Sample*
7. NELAC 7 Status & Agenda - *Colleen Freeze*
8. Policy on Expansion of the Scope of NELAC * - *Anne Rhyne & Joe Slayton*
9. Meeting with Regional RS&T Directors - *Jeanne Hankins*
10. Lab Questionnaire - *Silky Labie*
11. Reports from the Committee Chairs
 - S Accreditation Process - Gleason Wheatley
 - S Accrediting Authority - Louis Johnson
 - S Field Activities - Bart Simmons
 - S On-site Assessment - Bill Ingersoll
 - S Proficiency Testing - Barb Burmeister
 - S Program Policy & Structure - Ken Jackson
 - S Quality Systems - Scott Siders
 - S Regulatory Coordination - Carl Kircher
 - S National Database - Matt Caruso
 - S Transition - Silkie Labie
 - S Nominating - Jim Pearson
 - S Membership & Outreach - Marge Prevost
8. New Business

* Attachment

**List of Participants
Board of Directors Meeting
April 12, 2001**

Name	Affiliation	Address
Dr. Charles Brokopp Chair	UT Department of Health	T: 801-584-8406 F: 801-584-8486 E: cbrokopp@doh.state.ut.us
Ms. Ann Marie Allen	MA Dept. of Environmental Protection	T: 978-682-5237 F: 978-688-0352 E: ann.marie.allen@state.ma.us
Dr. Stephen Billets Exec. Secy., Acting	USEPA/ORD	T: 702-798-2232 F: 702-798-2261 E: billets.stephen@epa.gov
Ms. Jeanne Hankins Director	USEPA/ORD	T: 919-541-1120 F: 919-541-4261 E: hankins.jeanne@epa.gov
Dr. Paul Kimsey	CA Department of Health Services	T: 510-40-2411 F: 510-540-3075 E: pkimsey@dhs.ca.gov
Ms. Silky Labie	FL Department of Environmental Protection	T: 904-488-2796 F: 904-922-4614 E: labie_s@dep.state.fl.us
Dr. Tom Maloney	USGS/NWQL	T: 303-236-3460 F: 303-236-3499 E: tmaloney@usgs.gov
Dr. Jim Pearson (absent)	VA Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services	T: 804-786-7905 F: 804-371-7973 E: jpearson@dgs.state.va.us
Ms. Anne Rhyne (absent)	TNRCC	T: 512-239-6830 F: 512-239-6410 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Ms. Jackie Sample	US DOD	T: 843-764-7337 (x11) F: 843-764-7360 E: samplejh@navsea.navy.mil
Mr. Joe Slayton	USEPA/Region 3	T: 410-305-2653 F: 410--305-3095 E: slayton.joe@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Nancy Wentworth (invited)	USEPA/OEI	T: 202-564-6830 F: 202-565-2441 E:

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Name	Affiliation	Address
Ms. Barbara Burmeister	Chair, Proficiency Testing	T: 608-265-1100 F: 608-265-1114 E: burmiemail.slh.wisc.edu
Mr. Matt Caruso	Chair, National Database	T: 518-485-5570 F: 518-485-5568 E: caruso@wadsworth.org
Mr. William Ingersoll (absent)	Chair, On-site Assessment	T: 843-764-7337 F: 843-764-7360 E: ingersollws@navsea.navy.mil
Dr. Ken Jackson	Chair, Program Policy and Structure	T: 518-485-5570 F: 518-485-5568 E: jackson@wadsworth.org
Mr. Louis Johnson	Chair, Accrediting Authority	T: 225-765-2405 F: 225-765-2408 E: louis_j@deq.state.la.us
Dr. Carl Kircher	Chair, Regulatory Coordination	T: 904-791-1574 F: 904-7971-1591 E: carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us
Ms. Marge Prevost	Chair, Membership and Outreach	T: 515-485-5570 F: 515-485-5568 E: mmp03@health.state.ny.us
Mr. Scott Siders	Chair, Quality Systems	T: 217-785-5163 F: 217-785-0944 E: epa6113@epa.state.il.us
Dr. Bart Simmons (absent)	Chair, Field Activities	T: 510-540-3112 F: 510-540-2305 E: bsimmons@dtsc.ca.gov
Mr. Gleason Wheatley	Chair, Accreditation Process	T: 502-564-6120 F: 502-564-8930 E: gleason.wheatley@mail.state.ky.us
Dr. Gene Tatsch (Contractor Support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: 919-541-6930 F: 828-628-0659 E: cet@rti.org

**NELAC Board of Directors Meeting
April 12, 2001
New Action Items**

Item No.	Action	Status
1	Ms. Labie will check with ACIL on their interest in facilitating an independent conflict resolution clearinghouse for NELAP.	
2	Ms. Labie and Mr. Johnson will coordinate the efforts of the Transition and Accrediting Authority committees for survey development.	
3	Dr. Brokopp will obtain a nominating committee status from Dr. Pearson.	

**Action Items from Previous Meetings
NELAC Board of Directors
April 12, 2001**

No.	Date of Meeting	Action	Status
1	04/13/00	Dr. Jackson, and Dr. Kimsey will provide a short summary of recent Accrediting Authority workgroup teleconferences to Ms. Hankins to be included in the materials for the next board meeting. (Will be an on-going item).	On-going
2	01/11/99	Committee Chairs are to prepare "Frequently Asked Questions" for posting on the NELAC Website. They are to submit these to the Membership and Outreach Committee.	On-going
3	09/23/99	Dr. Jackson will draft a policy for responding to future offers of NELAC-associated activities at national meetings.	On-going
6	05/04/00	The Membership and Outreach committee will draft a policy addressing the logistics of web-submitted issues: routing, response, etc.	On-going
8	05/08/00	Dr. Brokopp will explore organizational issues with ECOS.	Ongoing
9	7/26/00	Dr. Brokopp will continue to lead exploration of viable options, including financial issues.	Ongoing
13	7/13/00	The Program Policy and Structure Committee is tasked with developing specific draft wording of a reorganized NELAC at NELAC 6i.	Deferred
14	8/10/00	Ms. Allen, Ms. Labie, and Dr. Brokopp will draft a plan, based on the most recent work by the transition committee, for submittal to EPA.	Deferred
17	9/12/00	Mr. Parr will draft a NELAC-7i proposal for Dr. Brokopp, Ms. Labie, Dr. Kimsey to review prior to presentation to the full Board.	Ongoing
22	10/31/00	Committee efforts should cite by reference the desired ISO wording, adding explanatory and supplemental notes as needed.	Ongoing
24	10/31/00	Ms. Hankins will identify a representative from ISO be invited to participate in a future Board teleconference to discuss viable options for use of ISO language in the NELAC Standard.	Deferred
25	11/09/00	Mr. Siders will draft a response to AIHA, for Board review, outlining the committee's plans for development of a NELAC asbestos standard.	Complete

No.	Date of Meeting	Action	Status
30	11/09/00	Dr. Brokopp agreed to follow up with Dr. Billets on possibilities for new promotional ideas and report to the Board at next month's meeting.	Ongoing
35	1/1/01	Dr. Brokopp and Dr. Kimsey will explore possible legal options for continued use of ISO language in the NELAC Standard.	Ongoing
37	1/1/01	Dr. Brokopp will Email the Board and committee chairs for inputs on presenters & topics at the WTQA meeting next August.	Complete
39	2/8/01	Dr. Billets will obtain an update from Ms. Sample, and offer his assistance, in making arrangements for NELAC 7i.	Complete
42	2/8/01	Dr. Billets will follow-up with Membership and Outreach committee on Item No. 6 (05/04/2000).	Ongoing
43	2/8/01	Dr. Brokopp will revisit Item No. 9 (7/26/2000) to consider developing a briefing package for the new administration.	Ongoing
45	2/8/01	Mr. Slayton will contact Mr. Siders on the status of Item 25 (11/09/2000)	Complete
46	3/8/01	Ms. Rhyne & Mr. Slayton will draft a policy for adding new areas to the NELAC Standard.	Complete
47	3/8/01	Ms. Hankins will forward guest room reservation data from recent meetings contracted by EPA in the Washington, DC area to Ms. Sample.	Complete
48	3/8/01	Board members should forward counsel to Dr. Jackson on development of an event-sponsor policy.	Deferred
49	3/8/01	Revisions of the proposed NELAC 7 schedule will be considered to accommodate travel times.	Complete
50	3/8/01	Board members should to submit NELAC support items to Dr. Billets or Dr. Brokopp so that a prioritized list of needed support can be discussed at its next meeting.	Complete